

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 DAMASC 04617 111229Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
-----043463 111231Z /40  
O 111131Z AUG 78  
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9171

S E C R E T DAMASCUS 4617

STADIS//////////

EXDIS

FOR NEA DRAPER FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PBOP MOPS SY LE IS  
SUBJECT: LEBANON

REF: STATE 203299

1. BASIS FOR KHADDAM'S RECEIVING ME ON EVENING OF MY FIRST WORKDAY, AUGUST 9, WAS THAT I HAD URGENT MATTER TO DISCUSS. WE HAD GONE TO KHADDAM'S PRIVATE SECRETARY WITH REQUEST THAT, AS AN EXCEPTIONAL CASE, KHADDAM RECEIVE ME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE ENABLING ME TO COMBINE INITIAL PROTOCOL CALL WITH CARRYING OUT URGENT INSTRUCTIONS I HAD RECEIVED. DEPARTMENT'S COUNTERMANDING INSTRUCTIONS ARRIVED JUST BEFORE KHADDAM'S SECRETARY CALLED TO SAY THAT KHADDAM WOULD SEE ME IN APPROXIMATELY ONE HOUR ON BASIS OF THIS URGENCY. WHEN WE INQUIRED ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF POSTPONING MEETING, SECRETARY SAID IMPOSSIBLE FOR KHADDAM TO SEE ME OVER NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS. I WAS CONCERNED THAT I WOULD ACCORDINGLY LOSE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE THIS PITCH WITH KHADDAM AT LATER DATE AND SEEING ANYONE BELOW KHADDAM WOULD HAVE BEEN UNAVAILING. I ASSUMED (INCORRECTLY) THAT AMBASSADOR PARKER WOULD HAVE MADE HIS  
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PRESENTATION BY THAT TIME, AND I DID NOT FORESEE GOL OBJECTIONS IN VIEW OF THE SERIOUSLY DETERIORATING SITUATION IN BEIRUT THEN OCCURRING. WE ALSO FEARED SYRIANS WOULD MISUNDERSTAND OUR LAST MINUTE REJECTION OF MEETING, WHICH WE HAD REQUESTED ON EXCEPTIONAL BASIS.

2. FURTHERMORE, I WAS CONCERNED AT LOSS OF CREDIBILITY HAD I

USED MY MEETING WITH KHADDAM MERELY TO PRESENT COPIES OF CREDENTIALS, WHEN HE HAD AGREED TO SEE ME SO PROMPTLY ON BASIS OF URGENT MATTER TO BE DISCUSSED. I COULD, OF COURSE, HAVE CONFINED MY SUBSTANTIVE REMARKS TO REITERATING OUR CONCERN WITH DISPROPORTIONATE SYRIAN ACTIONS IN EAST BEIRUT, BUT PELLETREAU HAD ALREADY ONE THIS SEVERAL TIMES, MOST RECENTLY ON AUGUST 7 (TWO DAYS BEFORE) AND KHADDAM WAS CLEARLY UNDER THE IMPRESSION I HAD SOMETHING NEW TO DISCUSS.

3. I REGRET IF THIS HAS CAUSED PROBLEMS FOR YOU, BUT AT THIS MOMENT DO NOT SEE THAT MY DEMARCHE HAS OR WILL CAUSE NEGATIVE IMPACT IN AREA. IT CERTAINLY STARTED ME OFF WELL HERE. IF CURRENT BEIRUT CEASE-FIRE BREAKS DOWN AND WE DECIDE TO CONSIDER RETURNING TO "MINI-ARAB SUMMIT" APPROACH, WE WILL AT LEAST HAVE ADVANCE KNOWLEDGE THAT SYRIANS ARE NOT TOTALLY UNRECEPTIVE.

4. MINE WAS A VERY RELUCTANT JUDGMENT CALL ON THE BASIS OF THE CONSIDERATIONS OUTLINED ABOVE. THE DECISION WAS NOT MADE IN HASTE. HAD THERE BEEN TIME, I WOULD HAVE SENT YOU A FLASH MESSAGE TO EXPLAIN ABOVE AND GIVE YOU OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE DECISION. BUT THERE JUST WASN'T ENOUGH TIME.

5. AS YOU KNOW, I AM NOT ONE TO TAKE INSTRUCTIONS LIGHTLY, BUT I HAD TO ACT FAST, AND THE  
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CIRCUMSTANCES AT THE TIME SEEMED TO INDICATE THE DESIRABILITY OF A GO-AHEAD ON THE BASIS OF THE ORIGINAL INSTRUCTIONS.

6. MEA CULPA.  
SEELYE

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** DEMARCHE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 11 aug 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
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**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014